

## AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following paragraph on page 1, line 2:

### BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Please insert the following paragraph on page 2, line 24:

### SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Please amend the paragraph beginning on page 2, line 29, as follows:

The object is achieved ~~according to the invention by the features of claims 1 and 4~~ by a method and apparatus for detecting overlapping flat mailpieces in a transport path for mailpieces that are transported vertically in succession. At least two transport stages are successively arranged in the transport path. Each transport stage has a nominal speed, wherein the nominal speed of a following transport stage in a transport direction is in each case higher than the nominal speed of the transport stage preceding it. A speed of the transported mailpieces is measured by scanning the items in front of a following transport stage for a maximum distance that is shorter than a shortest agreed mailpiece length by means of two sensors that are arranged on either side of the transport path. Measured results are evaluated if a sensor measures a speed that deviates only slightly by a defined small value from the nominal speed of the following transport stage. An overlap is detected if simultaneously measured speeds of the two sensors are different and a smaller measured speed deviates from a greater speed by a defined value.

Please insert the following paragraph on page 3, line 26:

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWINGS

Please insert the following paragraph on page 4, line 3:

### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Please add the enclosed abstract on a separate page.

Attachment: Abstract on a separate page